Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EB-07 ISO-00 AGR-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 IGA-01 AID-05 COME-00 FRB-03 TRSE-00

XMB-02 OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 /100 W 000272

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, BG

SUBJECT: PRIVATE JUTE TRADERS FREE TO ARRANGE EXPORT SALES

REF: DACCA 4519

- 1. BDG ANNOUNCED SEPTEMBER 20 DECISION TO PERMIT PRIVATE EXPORTERS TO NEGOTIATE DIRECTLY WITH FOREIGN BUYERS FOR SALE OF RAW JUTE, ALTHOUGH SUCH SALES WILL BE MADE "THROUGH THE BANGLADESH JUTE EXPORT CORPORATION". ACCORDING TO PRESS RELEASE, DECISION TAKEN TO IMPROVE THE INTERNAL JUTE MARKET AS WELL AS RAW JUTE EXPORTS.
- 2. MUJIB GOVERNMENT HAD PERMITTED THE FOUR (YES, FOUR) BDG CORPORATION WHICH BUY RAW JUTE TO NEGOTIATE SALES DIRECTLY WITH FOREIGN BUYERS, WITH ACTUAL SALES GOING THROUGH THE BJEC, WITHOUT PREMIUM. BEFORE THAT, BJEC NEGOTIATED ALL EXPORT SALES.
- 3. JUTE MINISTER MADE ANNOUNCEMENT AT MEETING WITH BDG JUTE PURCHASING CORPORATION HEADS AND PRIVATE TRADERS. MINISTER EXPLAINED DECISION REFLECTED CONCERN OVER BDG JUTE PURCHASING OCRPORATIONS' OPERATING LOSSES, EXPECTATION THAT GROWERS WOULD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BENEFIT (BDG BUYNG OFFICIALS ARE WIDELY BELIEVED TO BE PAYING

GROWERS WELL UNDER THE MINIMUM PRICE OF 90 TAKA/MAUND AND POCKETING THE DIFFERENCE), AND NEED TO BOOST EXPORT SALES. MINISTER THOUGHT THAT ACREAGE WOULD DROP NEXT YEAR IF MINIMUM PRICE NOT RPT NOT PAID FARMER. MINISTER EXPRESSED CONVICTION THAT PRIVATE TRADERS WOULD OPERATE WITH INTEGRITY AND HONESTY. (FYI ACCORDING ONE ATTENDEE, PRIVATE TRADERS THEN FOUGHT AMONG THEMSELVES FOR RIGHT TO SPEAK, RAISED PETTY COMPLAINTS AND THEN ACCUSED BDG OF SECRETLY INSTRUCTING MILLS TO PAY GROWERS ONLY 70/75 MAUND. MINISTER THEN ANGRILY LEFT MEETING. END FYI)

4. THIS STEP REFLECTS PRIMARILY BDG CONCERN OVER EXTREMELY POOR PERFORMANCE OF BDG CORPORATION CONCERNED AND THEIR DEPRESSING RAW JUTE EXPORT PERFORMANCE, BUT IS ALSO IN LINE WITH NEW GOVERNMENT'S RELATIVELY GREATER WILLINGNESS TO RELY ON PRIVATE SECTOR. A PRIVATE TRADER HERE EXPECTS THIS NEW ARRANGMENT WILL IN FACT BENEFIT THE GROWER AND COQVD HELP IMPROVE EXPORT PICTURE, BUT LATTER, OF COURSE, AFFECTED BY FOREIGN DEMAND AS WELL AS DOMESTIC SUPPLY SIDE. TO DATE OUTLOOK FOR RAW JUTE EXPORTS THIS SEASON (FROM JULY 1), DESPITE 20,000 LONG TON SCALE TO BRAZIL, REMAINS LITTLE BETTER THAN LAST YEAR'S DISMAL (LESS THAN 200,000 LONG TONS) PERFORMANCE.

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